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AUTHOR Clements, Millard
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ABSTRACT

The politics of the behavioral modification approach to educational evaluation are examined in this position paper. In recent years the science of behavior modification has become an established political doctrine in professional education. Behavioral objectives, behavior change, performance criteria, and competency-based instruction are just a few terms of an educational evaluation system concerned with the quality control manufacture of human products with specified performance characteristics. The danger of this behavioral orientation is that it is a political approach to science and education that is being disguised as rational, scientific, and politically neutral when, in fact, it is not. The problem with the behavioral manufacturers is that they suggest that only technical questions concerning efficiency should be asked rather than ethical, moral, and political questions concerning the humanistic development of students. Rather, evaluation should be qualitative in order to deepen our awareness of what it means to be human. It should be concerned with the quality of interpersonal relationships rather than the establishment of a management caste system. It should judge the moral integrity and intrinsic meaningfulness of tasks, relationships, and work which students are called on to do. (Author/DE)

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EVALUATION AS A POLITICAL ENDEAVOR

by

Millard Clements
New York University
School of Education
New York, New York 10003

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EVALUATION AS A POLITICAL ENDEAVOR

Introduction

In sharing these thoughts with you I am sharing my effort to think about educational matters that should be a deep concern to us all. This is a meeting of social studies teachers. Our role and responsibility compels us to be concerned about past and present social realities. Our business is not peddling myths or telling lies. Our task is to engage children and youth in thoughtful study, conversation and reflection on the critical problems, accomplishments and crises of our nation and our planet.

Our species is faced with many troubling realities: millions of our fellow human beings will be starving to death in the weeks, months and years ahead. Many forms of lovely animal life are facing extinction because of greed, pollution and indifference. Thousands of human beings are today being tortured, harrassed, jailed and murdered by official governments. We need only to think of the recent goverument in Greece, the present governments in Chile and Brazil.

We can try to think about Vietnam. The casualties, the defolients the bombs, the napalm, and the dead are monuments to the savagery of which human beings are capable.

We can try to think about Watergate. The testimony of the CIA, the assassination attempts, the FBI, the withholding of information from Congress, disclose the tawdry capacities of government leaders and educated men of power.

We can try to think about poverty, wealth and power. The price we pay for the super rich is the super poor. The crisis of environment that we experience as air pollution, the death of our lakes and rivers, or urban devastation results from the maldistribution of wealth and opportunity within our nation and on our planet.

Perhaps all times are times of crises, but our science, our technology, our surveillance techniques, our capacity for killing land, plants, rivers, lakes and people has brought us closer to doomsday than we have ever been before.

In the past, our wars, however savage, were local in their effects and consequences. Oppressions, however, barbaric, were relatively inefficient. Our capacity for destruction, however impressive, was limited. Now we live in a time when the capacity for destruction is without limit. We can destroy ourselves and each other with bombs, chemicals, aerosol cans, internal combustion engines and even with the waste products of the "peaceful atom."

The very best that we can look forward to as citizens of this planet is many years of turmoil, conflict and widespread human suffering. We have had a second incident at Wounded Knee. Senate Bill #1, now being considered in our Congress, promises to terminate many traditional possibilities for political struggle and debate that has characterized our own

experiment in democratic government. The inflation is redistributing the wealth of our nation and the world. The result is that the rich are becoming richer and the poor are being compelled to abandon some of their hopes and some of the possibilities. Triage, the identification of certain people as beyond help, hope and possibility, is a policy of governments of our planet.

In light of our times and our troubles, how should we think about and evaluate social study and social studies? What are our political options in thinking about studying with children the planet on which we live?

To say anything about people, governments, pollution or education is to engage in a political act. So that you may appraise the argument that I will make, let me say that I think that social studies and social study should be about human survival on our planet. I think we have to learn how to think about our planet and all of its people. There is no safety anywhere on it for any one people. Today we ourselves, along with the whales, have become an endangered species. We may be a life form that is not viable; we may be too savage, too linear, too dissociated from the matrix of plant and animal life of which we once were a part. The challenge we face, I think, is to struggle to understand ourselves, the problems of survival we face and to try to help children and youth to study, reflect, talk about and to become involved in efforts to reconnect our species with the life system of our planet.

Let us begin to think about the politics of school evaluation by thinking about some of the everyday realities of the politics of school life.

Some Politics of Schooling

A cliche of the educational profession is the affirmation that education is a state function. This cliche disguises a deep truth: politics of one sort or another is what education is all about.

Because legislation creates and regulates arrangements for schooling, education is an expression of partisan politics. Because books are bought, buildings constructed and maintained, teachers paid, there are struggles about money. Because of sex, the use of drugs, religion, racism, socialism, capitalism, communism, poverty, wealth, the third world, the fourth world, energy, and the super power confrontations, there are political struggles about ideas that should be dealt with in the schools.

Becaure power is exercised in the educational establishment, there are political struggles among professionals within the various governmental bureaucracies and within and between professional organizations and associations that seek to influence public policy. Politics permeates all aspects of the conduct of education.

If this political activity were open, candid and explicit, it would be an expression of the debate that is essential to a democratic society. To the extent that this politics of education is covert, without debate and conducted as a secret rite, it diminishes the democratic possibilities of our society and yet secrecy is the tendency of our profession:

> The preferred politics of pedagogies is the priest-craft protected by its putative mastery of the mysteries of educational expertise, supported

> by the public's emotional response to sacred values, and proceeding within the priviledged sanctuary of its private preserves. This pattern is not confined to dealing with "lay" persons; behavior characterizing the politics of education appears throughout the internal power struggles of educational associations as well.*

Political processes not only determine the dispersement of money, the establishment of policy and the exercise of authority, they create the covert contexts of ideas and beliefs within which explicit power struggles take place.

The Politics of Definitions and the Management of Reality

One sense of the word "politics" calls attention to efforts of individuals to rule and decide; another sense of the word calls attention to the management of reality through vocabulary and official definitions.

The words we use create realities. We often speak of "drop outs." We don't usually talk about school rejects. We talk about the "culturally deprived." We seldom speak of culturally deprived schools. We tend to use a political vocabulary that assuages professionals in education while it denigrates many whom the schools are said to serve.

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*Laurence Iannaccone, Politics and Education, The Center for Applied Research in Education. New York, 1967, p. 19.

We tend to use vocabularies that accept existing school customs, routines, status arrangements, and building designs. What are usually thought to be problematic are children that we are said to serve. Politically safe discussions and scholarship dealing with schools does not investigate men and women of power and prestige in education. It does not examine conventional wisdom nor explore covert definitions of reality.

A conventional educational vocabulary expresses a background of unconsidered beliefs that form a basis of discourse and research about educational matters. Such words as "learning," "curriculum," "teaching," "behavior," and "educational objectives" express meanings and associations that are felt to be self-evidently appropriate for conceptualizing educational concerns. If we are to be~~ing~~ to challenge educational thinking we must discover and confront this conventional professional vocabulary.

"Learning," "teaching," and "curriculum" are fundamental concepts in professional education. There is a vast literature connected with each of these ideas. There are experts in the field of "learning" and "learning theory;" there are a multitude of curriculum consultants available to guide state officials, district superintendents and parent groups. These are things about which much is presumed to be known. If we abandon the notions of "learning" and "curriculum" we will be compelled to formulate new conceptions of schooling and that effort may lead us into new possibilities for inventing schooling for young people.

If the word "work" rather than the word "learn" is used to refer to what children do in school, then social and political concerns arise that rarely develop when one thinks of schooling with vocabulary associated with

"learning." When "learn" is used, interests such as these are frequently expressed:

1. What behaviors do we want children to learn?
2. How shall we induce children to perform the behaviors we have selected for them?
3. How fast and how well can the children perform the behaviors we are seeking to establish?

Associated with these interests is a vast literature dealing with learning theory, experimental studies of animal learning, and some experimental studies of human learning in laboratory siturations. "Learning," in this sense, is the central idea of professional education today.

If the word "work" is used to refer to school activities of children, then we can invent new sorts of educational concern:

1. What is honest, serious or authentic work for children of school age?
2. Is school work (in the context of social study) honest work?
3. To what extent is school work made work?
4. Is honest work possible in school?

Thinking with the word "work" calls attention to human experiences with assembly line production, the made work of certain prisons, typing, researching, performing, housekeeping, cooking, selling, teaching, playing music. Work is a complicated social and political activity that is rich in human meaning. We can begin to think about schocling in new ways if we seek

to evaluate the authenticity of work experiences of children in school.

The school work in which children engage is done in social settings. Every school is a social and political reality. If we elect to use the work "milieu" to refer to the social and political conditions that are imposed upon children, we will have anotheropportunity to challenge conventional thinking about schooling. If we think with the word "milieu" then questions such as these arise:

1. What is the social condition of being a student in school?
2. Is authentic work possible in school milieux?
3. What milieux facilitate honest work?

Our schools today teach children what it means politically to be a student. That is the schools most important message. That message is communicated regardless of what we think of as curriculum development or reform because curriculum change usually assumes the unquestioned preservation of the political conditions of school work and milieux.

Two fundamental obligations of scholarship in education are: 1) studies of milieu and 2) studies of work. Neither has recieved adequate attention from professionals in education. We have little sociology, ethnography, psychology, or anthropology of schools, and we have little serious study of the nature of ideas in the scholarship of education.

Milieu has to do with the structure of relationships among professionals and between professionals and students. What relationships should prevail? What relationships are possible? What variety of structures should be altered? Which preserved?

A study of milieux would investigate how institutions work, what they do to people, and how they achieve their effects. A study of schooling that ignores the effects of milieu ignores the significant factors that affect the lives of children in school. It is the condition of being a student in a particular school and not what is ostensibly taught that is most significant in the life of a student.

Milieu has probably not received attention because it is politically dangerous to investigate the status system of schooling and its effects. It is much safer to study the victims of society rather than the powerful who control its institutions, the inferred mental processes that may go on inside of people's heads rather than the observable processes that go on inside of public schools.

The triumph of psychology as the dominant discipline in education is a systematic expression of this timidity: psychology, in the context of education, preserves institutions from scrutiny while engaging professionals in harmless studies of the powerless and the politically unimportant.

Work is the public function of schooling: children are to be engaged in writing, in history, sociology, poetry, literature, natural science, mathematics, and art. In order to guarantee that young people in school will be called upon to engage in honest work, professionals in education must give profound attention to the nature of ideas. What is history that it may be taught? What is poetry? Social science? Literature? What is the nature of the ideas with which we work? These are some of the most difficult questions that a teacher can ask. There are no final answers to these questions. They must be asked over and over again if we are to guarantee that the work

of the schools merits the attention and energies of the young.

The study of ideas does not have a prominent place in the scholarship of education because ideas along with institutions are not to be questioned. Ideas and books are simply given; the responsibility of schooling is to "cover them," to get certain ideas "across," but not to evaluate them or to rethink what an honest encounter with an idea might be.

Both the forms and the content of schooling have developed without a significant critical scholarship. Today we have a gigantic educational monolith that has become functionally autonomous, impervious to criticism, and irrelevant to the problems of survival on our planet.

The schools <u>are</u>; ideas are simply <u>given</u>; their characters and virtues are fixed. They are not to be examined, thought about nor made accountable. It is an unexamined article of faith that whatever a child is called upon to do in school is worth his/her energies and whatever ideas are brought to his/her attention deserve his/her interest.

The difficult but essential ethical questions are seldon asked:

> What ideas merit the attention of the young?
> How should they be encountered?
> What is honest work for a child in school?
> How can you tell?

The function of reserach in education appears to be to direct attention away from the essential scholarship of education and to focus it on safe studies of powerless individuals and politically neutral problems.

Research particularly psychological studies, provides a significant means of preserving educational institutions from scrutiny and evaluation while providing professionals in education with a rhetoric of scientism and good will.

Our common understanding of schooling suggests that the schools are avenues of opportunity and self development that society provides for all of its citizens. It is true that teachers are sometimes poorly trained, school buildings are sometimes old and in poor repair, minority children are too often segregated and children in the barrios do poorly in school. But through improved inservice programs, improved teacher training, new facilities, developing technology, recruitment of minority teachers and administrators, the insights arising out of educational research and the application of behavioral science to the study of these problems, the educational troubles of schooling will be solved and indeed are being solved today.

An uncommon sense view of schooling suggests that we face problems and issues for which there are no relevant problem solvers, approaches or techniques. We do not face <u>problems</u> for which we have relevant expertise. We face dilemmas that challenge us to rethink and reconsider the situation of schools today. Schools rather than getting better as the common sense suggests, poignantly illustrates some of the saddest political realitiies of our society.

Science Defined as Behavioral Management

If we are to think about political alternatives in school evaluation, we have to locate ourselves in time. We are working and thinking today, as I have suggested, on a planet that has deep political struggles between the rich and the poor, between nation and nation, religion and religion, and between race and race.

In addition, we live in a particular moment in the history of ideas. Both social science and education have in recent years, become expressions of government interests. To a large extent, social science has become what we now call behavioral science, and behavioral science is an enterprise that is purchased by government agencies and private foundations.

What ideas about research, education and evaluation are congenial to the governments of our time? What has behavioristic science come to mean? What does it mean to the evaluation of school activities?

The behavioristic perspective in social science has been an important and seriously debated political idea. Critics and advocates of this point of view implicitly or explicitly face deep social issues: What shall human beings take themselves to be? What is or should be a science of human beings? Those that call themselves behaviorists tend to say that a science of human beings should be modeled on the techniques and traditions of natural science. B.F. Skinner is a popular champion of this political orientation and it is useful to consider his statements of this perspective:

> As a science of behavior adopts the strategy of physics and biology, the autonomous agent

> to which behavior has traditionally been attributed is replaced by the environment - the environment in which the species evolved and in which the behavior of the individual is shaped and maintained.*

According to this point of view, the actions, beliefs and purposes of people are defined to be expressions of natural processes that a science of human beings will eventually describe, predict and control.

A science of human beings is defined as a science of behavior:

> For more than twenty-five hundred years close attention has been paid to mental life, but only recently has any effort been made to study human behavior as something more than a mere by-product. Physics did not advance by looking more closely at the jubilance of a falling body, or biology by looking at the nature of vital spirits, and we do not need to try to discover what personalities, states of mind, feelings, traits of character, plans, purposes, intentions, or the other perquisites of autonomous man really are in order to get on with a scientific analysis of behavior.**

This social science, or as it is now called, this science of behavior, has lead to the development of probabalistic strategies of behavior management

*B.F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity. A Bantam/Vintage Book, New York, 1971, p. 175.

**Skinner, Ibid, p. 12-13.

by the military, prison officials, teachers, teacher trainers and social planners. The word "behavior" has political meaning. It denotes a relationship between a powerful group and a subject population. When the business of science is defined to be the management of behavior, this science exists through the creation of a caste system composed of the managers and the managed. The science of behavior is an explicit effort of elite political groups to manage vulnerable peoples: Vietnamese villagers, slow learners, children or the urban poor.

An extensive use of the science of behavior was an important aspect of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Noan Chomsky,* in his essay, "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" reviewed this exercise of science and described how it worked in this way:

> ". . . For example, Charles Wolf, senior economist of the RAND corporation, discusses the matter in a recent book.**
> Wolf considers two "theoretical models" for analyzing insurgency problems. The first is the approach of the hearts-and-minds school of counter-insurgency, which emphasizes the importance of popular support. Wolf agrees that it is no doubt "a desirable goal" to win "popular allegiance to a government that is combating an insurgent movement," but this objective, he argues

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*Noam Chomsky, American Power and the New Mandarins. Vintage Book, A Division of Random House, New York, 1967, p. 54.

**Charles Wolf, United States Policy and the Third World. Little, Brown, and Company, 1967, Boston.

> is not appropriate "as a conceptual framework for counter-insurgency programs." His alternative approach has as its "unifying theme" the concept of "influencing behavior, rather than attitudes." Thus, "confiscation of chickens, razing of houses, or destruction of villages have a place in counter-insurgency efforts, but only if they are done for a strong reason: namely, to penalize those who have assisted the insurgents. . . whatever harshness is meted out by government forces (must be) unambiguously recognizable as deliberately imposed because of behavior by the population that contributes to the insurgent movement."

As this illustration of the science of behavior reveals, it is a "science" with a special politics.

The methods of a science of behavior are not neutral, value-free techniques for the development of information, as they are often alleged to be. They are explicit expressions of political power. As Alvin Gouldner suggests, what we do to each other in the way of "science" reveals and expresses what we believe about ourselves and other human beings.

> Every research method makes some assumptions about how information may be secured from people and what may be done with people, or to them, in order to secure it; this, in turn, rests on certain domain assumptions concerning who and what people are.

> To the degree that the social sciences are modelled on the physical sciences, they entail the domain assumption that people are "things" which may be treated and controlled in much the same manner that other sciences control their non-human materials: people are "subjects" which may be subjected to the control of the experimenter for purposes they need not understand or even consent to. Such social science will thoughtlessly drift into buying increments of information at the cost of human autonomy and dignity.*

The science of behavior has been discussed and debated in the social science literature for many decades. Although I hope it is of waning interest among social scientists today, it has been an important political perspective and it is a growing "scientific" orientation of the military, the government and education. The technicians who conduct this management are socialized to their role and it is not difficult to find their liturgy.

> The psychologist has three main aims directed at human behavior:
>
> 1. Description
> 2. Prediction
> 3. Control
>
> His control is social, hygenic and practical.**

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*Alvin W. Gouldner, The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology. Basic Books, Inc., New York, London, 1970, p. 50.

**William C. Resnick and Herbert L. Sachs, Dynamic General Psychology, an Introduction, Holbrook Press, Boston, 1971, p. 33-34.

. . .To the extent that we can predict and control behavior, its study may be called science.*

With this as an official definition of science both the managers and the managed are preapred for their political futures.

Hygenic pacification at home and abroad is a political reality of a science of behavior. The apologetic literature of the science of behavior prepared technicians for their careers of manipulation. It is essential that technicians believe that their manipulations are benevolent and in the service of civilization. Managing behavior may thus be transformed into the holy mission of teaching children to read, preparing effective teachers or creating peace in Vietnam. However benign the rhetoric, however inevitable it is made to appear, a science of behavior is the study of vulnerable people in the service of the strong and powerful. The choice to think of human beings as "things" and a science of human beings as the effort to predict and control behavior is a decision of how to live politically in the world. It is not an imperative of science or rational thought.

In recent years the science of behavior has become the established political doctrine in professional education. Behavioral objectives, behavior change, performance criteria and competency-based instruction, illustrate the vocabulary of the new politics of education:

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*Stanley K. Fitch, Insights Into Human Behavior. Holbrook Press, Boston, 1970, p. 4.

> Competency based teacher education is the catalyst that can revitalize the teacher education enterprise.*
>
> It can be expected that the corner stone of teacher education curriculum reform will be research and development in teacher behavior.**

The U.S. Office of Education through funding policies and many states through certification procedures are firmly endorsing an approach to education that is an expression of the behavior management orientation. The 72nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education is titled Behavior Modification in Education.*** The first words in Chapter Two of this book express the political mission that is coming to prevail in education:

> The content of this chapter is the modification of teaching behavior treated as a general class of behaviors. Teacher education programs may be conceptualized as behavior modification systems designed to modify complex behavioral repertoires which are adaptable to a variety of learning programs. Developing a teacher education program which applies behavioral modification concepts

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*Benjamin Rosner, "The Promise of Competency-Based Teacher Education," Education Quarterly, Volume IV, No. 3, Spring, 1973, p.2.

**Ibid, p. 3.

***Behavior Modification in Education. The 72nd Yearbook of the Study of Education, Edited by Carl E. Thousen, 1973.

> would be simpler if we knew how to use these principles to control student learning. At the present time, however, only a relatively small number of student behaviors can be brought under behavioral control by applying these principles.*

As this quotation suggests, professionals in education are being prepated to be technicians. We are fortunate that they have only the ethics and not the expertise for such management.

The drift into the politics of behavior management has been discussed in the professional literature, but most of the debate has explored the question of whether or not all, many or some important educational objectives can be formulated in management terms. The critics tend to say that many or most important things worth learning cannot be dealt with this way. Intelligent advocates tend to agree that may be true, but they argue that some important educational objectives can be usefully formulated in these political terms. This is an important professional debate, but the political realities of behavior management transcend the terms of even significant commentary on behavior management.

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*Chapter II, "Behavior Modification in Teacher Education," by Fredric J. McDonald, p. 41.

The Politics of Behavioral Definitions in Education

Four questions will focus our exploration of the politics of the behavioral orientation:

1. What image of human beings does it project?
2. What image of professionals does it project?
3. What purpose does it serve?
4. What image of knowledge does it project?

These are not intended to be philosophical questions. They are political questions about the every day professional life of behaviorists. As answers to these questions develop, the politics of these ideas and approaches to evaluation of education can be assessed. This exploration will help us to discover how a science of behavior directs us to live in the world with each other and there is not more important political issue in education today.

There are many vivid spokesmen for the behavioral orientation. Frederick J. McDonald, for example, in his popular book, Educational Psychology, clarified the fundamental political conceptions in this way:

> Education is a process or an activity which is directed at desirable changes in the behavior of human beings.*

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*Frederick J. McDonald, Educational Psychology. Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., San Francisco, 1959, p. 4.

> An educational objective is a statement of a desired behavior change, that is, it is a statement about the behavior that shall be acquired by the child.*
>
> However, the function of the learning experience is to evoke the desirable responses, to strengthen these responses, and to hasten the weakening of undesirable responses.**
>
> The teacher in making decisions is, in a general sense, manipulating and controlling the child's behavior.***

This is the common sense of professional education. What does it reveal about the politics of being human? Education? Evaluation?

What Image of Human Beings Does the Science of Behavior Project?

Probably the most obvious thing to notice about this political orientation is that little attention is ever given to ordinary people, ordinary hopes and ordinary dreams. What exists is behavior that some political elite considers appropriate or inappropriate, behavior that is to be reinforced or extinguished. The political mission of behavior management is to:

> strip away the functions previously assigned

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*Frederick J. McDonald, Educational Psychology. Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., San Francisco, 1959, p. 23.

**Ibid., p. 25.

***Ibid, p. 27.

to autonomous man and transfer them one by one to the controlling environment.*

Coladarci formulates this mission to diminish human beings in two corollaries. Educators must know how to manage:

. . .the inculcation of attitudes and motives.

. . .the learning of behavior capabilities.**

People, according to this political orientation, are imperfect accidental products of society with whom technicians may experiment, stamp in good behaviors and stamp out bad ones.

The basic political affirmation of those who write behavioral definitions of educational objectives, performance criteria and design experimental procedures for behavior management appears to be that:

1. It is appropriate and scientific to pay attention to the behavior of individuals.
2. It is appropriate and scientific to seek to predict, to control, to shape and to manage the behavior of others.
3. Human behavior is the process of reactions to or expressions of genetically determined characteristics constrained by particular social arrangements.

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*B.F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity. A Bantam/Vintage Book. New York, 1971, p. 189.

**Arthur P. Coladarci, "The Relevance of Psychology to Education," Foundations of Education. Edited by G. Kneller. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1967, p. 399.

This behavioral orientation projects an image of human beings that directs that people should have limited autonomy and limited potency. The danger of this proposition is that its validity depends upon belief. The more the technicians believe in their benevolence the more they will be commited to management. The more the managed are convinced they are not competent, the more incompetent they will become.

What Image of the Professional, the Technician, Does the Behavioral Orientation Project?

One thing is very clear: technicians are potent, intelligent and even autonomous. Coladarci expresses this autonomy this way:

> On the basis of this information, I hypothesize that this procedure will lead to the achievement of these behavior changes.*

This intelligent conception of education that Coladarci and others are affirming, implies that there are two orders of social reality. There are those who calculate and manage and there are those who are subject to experiementation and management. The managed appear to act out of socially determined needs and to be vulnerable to the press of environment. People must be studied in the fashion that things of nature are studied and manipulated. This intelligent conception of education transforms people into things to be known as stones, leaves and lice are known.

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*Arthur P. Coladarci, "The Relevance of Psychology to Education," Foundations of Education. Edited by G. Kneller. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1967, p. 396.

Romantic teachers and regal scientists of behavior often share the common faith that imperfect undeveloped insensitive or irrational people should be managed, known and controlled for their own and the greater good of society. This view of people politically treated as things may be best understood in contrast to the way technicians see themselves.

The technicians are tentative, hypothetical, rational, and autonomous in their involvement with people. We must look at the contrast between professionals and people if we are to explore the social and political meaning of the behavioral orientation. What are professionals?

1. They are value free technicians.
2. They are autonomous, objective, active and to some degree free of the press of circumstance and the drives of socially determined need systems.
3. They can and should manage, control, predict and study the behavior of others.

Professionals, this politics affirms, are or should be expert technicians who exercise the insights of value free science to manage the behaviors of people according to some interpretation of the public interest. Behavior technicians have the capacity to be objective and the ability to pursue and utilize value free information about the management of human lives. Professionals and people belong to different orders of social reality: people are caught up in the web of life but professionals dispassionately observe and compassionately manage the affairs of others.

It is this kind of benevolent management that created secure hamlets in Vietnam, democratic governments in Iran, Guatemala, Laos and Cambodia and it has created education in the schools of great American cities. This disposition to benevolent management is not an American invention: in previous years similar expressions of compassion produced peace and security in India, Pakistan, the Middle East and Ireland. What is new today is that this ancient predisposition of the strong to manage the weak is becoming implicit in our fundamental ways of knowing. It is becoming intelligent and even scientific to think of people as it they were things.

The government, the military, business and education now have technicians available who under the aura of science are eager to serve existing political interests. As social science becomes a predatory science of manipulation, as people are transformed into things or its that are variables in experimental studies, knowledge itself becomes an expression of political interest. If it was indeed irrational to question the wisdom of the Christmas bombing of North Vietnam or the covert bombing of Cambodia, then it is equally irrational to question the wisdom of performance-based teacher education or behavioral definitions of educational objectives. All of these are the policies of experts of high science management. The triumph of the behavioral orientation is that it transforms both the managers and the managed into moral eunuchs.

What Political Purposes are Served by the Science of Behavior?

Technicians ask technical questions. Coladarci is again helpful in developing an understanding of the politics of the behavioral orientation

in education:

> At the most general level, psychology is helpful to those who establish purposes by determining the degree to which the human organism is capable of achieving those educational purposes.*

Those who establish purposes are business, the military, and the state and federal governments, because they are the ones who pay the technicians of behavior. As science becomes an appendage of government, both the managers and the managed lose their capacity to see themselves as moral actors:

1. The managerial elite to this to themselves deliberately. They proclaim they are technicians and that their enterprise is value free. Thus, their science is for sale.
2. The managed are shaped by school experience and by the control of information; they are lead to doubt their own competence and to defer to the high priests of technology.

The result is diminished citizenship. When only the technicians know enough to judge the wisdon of pacification, defoliation, the bombing of Cambodia and education for the "culturally deproved," then the moral concerns of citizens become simply variables for the behavior technicians to manage for their employers.

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*Arthur P. Coladarci: ibid., p. 398.

It is an irony that the quest for objective scholarship has resulted in a scientism that is now in the service of political interests. The more neutral and technical the service, the more unobtrusive and available is the management expertise.

What Image of Knowledge Does the Science of Behavior Project?

The explicit purpose of knwoing for scientists of behavior is the prediction and control of behavior. Any other sort of knowledge is usually regarded as soft, lacking in rigor and unscientific. This purpose of some people politically controlling other people not only determines the character of psychological knowledge, it has implications for knowledge of any kind. If behavior managers are to manipulate and control cognitive behaviors, then they must formulate explicitly or utilize implicitly a conception of knowledge that is congenial with the conduct of behavior management.

If knowledge is to serve the political mission of the science of behavior then it must be psychologized and thus made to appear to be a product of culture itself. In order to engineer cognitive behavior a conception of knowledge must be developed that can be related to acts that technicians can describe, predict and control. Psychologized knowledge consists of neutral information about other people and other times: children, the civil war conflict, Vietnam. This knowledge is divorced from human struggle and made to appear to be simple linguistic expressions that are convenient for the design of behavioral investigations of education.

The critical element in this conception of teaching is the notion of educational objectives. An investigation of this conception will disclose the notion of knowledge that is coming to prevail in education. Let us

consider the perspective of Kibler, Barker and Miles again:

> Behavioral objectives are statements which describe what students will be able to do after completing a prescribed unit of instruction. For example, a behavioral objective for a unit in history might be: "The student will be able to list three major factors which gave rise to the Industrial Revolution."*

What can we observe in this description?

There are at least three elements of interest:

> ". . .objectives are statements which describe what students will be called upon to do. . ."
> ". . .the student will be able to list. . ."
> ". . .three major factors which gave rise to the Industrial Revolution."

This political orientation affirms that knowledge, like science itself, is neutral, value free and codificable in a fashion that will allow technicians to identify and manage cognitive behaviors appropriate to whoever employs them. The neutral value free stance may best be understood as a disguise of one political interest or another.

Knowledge is useful to behavior managers when:

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*Robert J. Kibler, Larry L. Barker & David T. Miles, Behavioral Objectives and Instruction. Allyn Bacon, Inc., Boston, 1970, p. 3.

1. It is conceived as information, as linguistic expressions, as neutral sentences about what is going on in the world.
2. It can be systematically codified and dispensed by technical management.
3. It is about <u>them</u>: the Viet Cong; children who can't read; the Industrial Revolution.
4. It is not thought of as relative to the efforts, struggles and political interests of human beings seeking to understand.

Psychologized knowledge exists apart from individual efforts. It can be recorded on file cards, in storage banks and on computer print-outs. Sentences often called generalizations can be listed, sanctified and, after they are politically blessed, teachers may be induced to change behavior regarding them. To "cover material" is an apt colloquialism for some teaching because it hints at fundamental political realities.

Professionals in education are now engaged in the development of completely psychologized knowledge about social affairs, history and teacher education. This is an extraordinary task because the brute fact of the human condition is that knowledge arises out of human struggle, that all such struggle is purposive and that it is difficult to understand <u>knowledge</u> apart from the purposes of those who made it.

When knowledge becomes information, when knowledge becomes neutral and value free and when the dissemination of sanctified knowledge becomes the technical responsibility of behavior managers, the dichotomy between the

managers and the managed becomes absolute. Both knowledge and science is then the interest of political men that technical management is predisposed to serve. To question this privilege, to question this science is to question civilization and rationality itself. Not only are people to become things, it must be thought to be wise and beautiful that it be so.

Description, prediction and control is what a science of nature has been and description, prediction and control is what political men are saying that a science of human beings should be. Lynn White, Jr., in a talk presented at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, December 27, 1966, explored what he called the historical roots of the ecological cirsis. He related the predatory character of "science" to fundamental Christian beliefs. Christians, he suggests, tend to believe that they are the center of the universe and that our planet is an incidental creation designed only for the convenience of Christian man. Although the geocentric theory of the Universe had to be abandoned eventually, the Christian egocentric theory of the universe still prevails. It is simply God's will that man should exploit nature for his own purposes. According to Lynn, reverence for life, humility and sensitivity to the feelings of natural things is not a prominent aspect of the Christian experience: Christian man and nature are two things and white Christian man is the master, the dramatic center of this creation.

Man as master of nature is an intoxicating belief and if it were not for the pollution of our rivers, lakes and air and if it were not for Vietnam, Watergate and the sexism and racism of our society, it might be a plausible religion. But white Christian man as an exploiter of nature and

as an exploiter of women and of third world peoples and, now, as an exploiter of himself is a tawdry social inventor. We have controlled nature too much without awareness and we have controlled subject peoples too long without sensitivity. The political technology that has made life on our planet problematical is now being directed to shape and manage human kind. Bland technologists, excited by their proximity to power are innocently involved in the effort to create a new society of diminished human beings. If we are to survive as human beings we must initiate a quest for deeper understanding rather than technical management of the hopes, dreams and behavior of others:

> "In a knowing conceived as awareness, the concern is not with 'discovering' the truth about a social world regarded as external to the knower but with seeing truth as growing our of the knower's encounter with the world and his effort to order his experience with it. The knower's knowing himself - of who, what and where he is - on the one hand, and of others and their social worlds, on the other, are two sides of a single process."*

The effort to predict and to control the lives of men and women resonates with the efforts of technologists to control and conquer nature. As Lynn White, Jr. suggests, when technologists are devoted to conquering

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nature rather than to understanding and living with or in it, and when technologists are devoted to conquering men and women rather than in deepening our awareness of one another, we can expect pollution and desolation on our planet and dehumanization in the ways we live together.

That priviledged elites may seek to conquer nature and regulate behavior in order to make themselves useful to business, industry and the military has been a routine political event. Men of power often act towards people without power as if they were animals, machines, robots, natives or slaves. That behavior manipulators are now eagerly collaborating in this effort and are seeking to establish that a science of behavior management is the only rigorous way that people may know about each other is a new colonialism that is reducing the need for management through terror and increasing the risk that whatever it means to be human, moral or potent may become artifacts of future experimental studies. The pollution of our lands, waters, cities and schools and the relentless conflicts around the world suggest that we must seek for alternatives to manipulations, behavior management, prediction and control if we are all not to become well-tended natives on some technological reservation.

My discussion so far suggests several important realities:

1. The politics of definitions are critical issues in the conduct of social science and in the conduct of education.
2. We ourselves have become an endangered species.
3. Our ways of knowing about ourselves, our science of human beings and our developing ways of conducting education are illustrations of this endangered condition.

As we think about our perilous times we should try to ask ourselves, "What is social studying in school about?" To talk about teaching social study, I have been suggesting, we need such words as "Integrity," "Honor," "Honesty," "Work," and "Milieux." Honorable social study is not management of behavior, as the CBTE technicians would have us believe. It is honest encounters with ideas, opinions, facts, situations, people, and relevant social realities.

Technical Evaluation in Social Studies and Social Study

According to the definitional politics of the behavior managers, evaluation is a technical aspect of instruction. If evaluation is a technical undertaking, then the educational concern is with the quality control manufacture of human products with specified performance characteristics. James A. Branch and Ambrose Clegg, Jr. catch the sense of this approach to evaluation in their recent book, Teaching Strategies for Social Studies:

> Evaluation is a technical aspect of instruction. Its purpose is to develop as much precise and objective information about the instructional process as possible in order to (1) assess the effectiveness of instruction; (2) determine the accomplishment of instructional goals; (3) provide feedback to the teacher about the instructional processes, and (4) provide information on which important decisions about students' progress, curriculum changes, and instructional goals can be made. Considered from a

> systems approach, evaluation is that part of the teaching-learning process that provides the continuous feedback of data to keep the system in adjustment and balance (see Fig. 14.1). Tests, observational reports, anecdotal records, sociograms, collections of student's work, class diaries, committee reports, logbooks, and teacher-made tests are all types of evidence data upon which evaluation is based. It must be remembered, however, that in the final analysis, evaluation is a judgemental act. The teacher's task, then, is to (1) formulate goals that are clear and precise, (2) set criteria that are appropriate and attainable, (3) gather data about the instructional process that is as accurate and objective as possible, and finally (4) report that data to students, parents, and administrators in ways that are clear and meaningful. Given such conditions, evaluation fulfills an important role in the teaching-learning process.*

One can apply this notion of evaluation to an individual, a classroom, a school district or to towns and villages as the department of Defense did in its efforts to educate rural Vietnamese.

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*James A. Banks, with contributions by Ambrose A. Clegg, Jr., Teaching Strategies for the Social Studies: Inquiry, Valuing, and Decision-Making. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, Mass., 1973, p. 521.

If evaluation is technical, neutral, non-political, then it presupposes the following state of affairs:

1. The agreed upon purpose of schooling is the manufacture of specified, described, explicit behaviors in school populations.
2. These explicit behaviors are known, agreed upon, and well understood.
3. They make up the important intellectual abilties, crafts, sensitivities that should be of concern in education.
4. The practical problem of schooling is the development of tactics and procedures that will produce the prescribed behaviors in the subject population.
5. Teachers and administrators can and should be involved or engaged in this manufacture of human behavior.
6. Children and parents should submit to this human engineering effort.

This is the covert politics of CBTE approaches to teacher education and behavioral orientation in education. It seems self evidently appropriate to some of us in professional education, and politically dangerous to many others of us.

Schooling is always a moral and political encounter between and among human beings. If approaches to evaluation or schooling appear to become technical, then the moral aspects of relationships become secondary, the politics become covert.

The incredible danger of the behavioral orientation is that it is a political approach to science and education that is being disguised as a rational, scientific, and politically neutral way of dealing with important social problems. In fact it is not scientific, not reasonable, not neutral, and not in our interest.

The Politics of Institutional Evaluation

If we are not to assess the behavioral characteristics of a human engineering process, what can we evaluate? What is to be assessed? What are the moral, ethical, political and religious questions that should be asked?

My answer is the schools themselves. I think that when we propose to evaluate educational activities that we should pose such questions as these: How should children spend their time in school? What should schools look like? Where should they be found? Who should be found in them? What variety of activities should be found there?

The problem of the behavior manufacturers is that they assume most of the things that should be questioned. They suggest that only technical questions should be asked: How efficiently are we producing the specified products?

Let us reconsider the four basic questions that have political meaning in any approach to educational evaluation:

1. What image of human beings should it project?
2. What image of professional should it project?

3. What purposes should it serve?

4. What image of knowledge should it project?

As we explore these questions again, we can explore an alternative politics of education.

What Image of Human Beings Should Our Approach to Evaluation Take?

Teachers and others who would be involved in schooling should think of children and youth as purposive individuals whose unique characteristic is that they are meaning-giving and fundamentally creative. They are subjects, not objects; they are people with hopes and dreams and they are not repertories of behaviors to be managed.

What Image of Professionals Should Our Approach To Evaluation Take?

A teacher is one more person caught up in the web of life. Teacher, as the students they propose to teach, have race and gender, age and social history. Teachers more than students must re-examine their professional work and private lives as part of the struggle for honest relationships and critical social understanding.

What Purposes Should Evaluation Serve in Education?

To evaluate is to assess in qualitative terms what is going on. In that sense the purpose of evaluation should be to deepen our awareness of what it means to be human, to use language and to grow up in the diverse arrangements that our planet affords. The practical purpose of evaluation is to discover and disclose how our institutions work.

We must discover a way to evaluate education that deals with institutional realities and not with rhetoric, good intentions, or ideological disguise.

What Image of Knowledge Should Evaluation Project?

The knowledge that any one of us may generate arises out of personal struggles and interests. It is never neutral, never non-political, never about them; it is always about us, the knowers in political relationship with the known. The politics of this relationship must be an explicit part of whatever it is that we come to say that we know.

These four principles of evaluation have deep implications for the definitiosn and conduct of education. Rather than define education as the change of behavior in some desirable direction, we could use this definition:

> Education is the provision of opportunities
> for interesting and honest work and occasions
> for fruitful conversations about one's work,
> ideas, society and life in general.

The value of this definition is that it assigns to professionals in education explicitly moral and political responsibilities:

1. To involve each purposive human being who comes to school in honest work and significant conversation.
2. To provide many different work opportunities for the many different individuals who seek the challenge of work and conversation.
3. To assess the quality of school offerings in terms of the variety and authenticity of work going on and in the quality of conversation and interpersonal relationships to be found in educational contexts.

This definition of education transforms "schools" from insitutions of technological management into complex social arrangements for authentic work and interesting conversation. The assessment of this service would depend upon an evaluation of qualitative aspects of the ambience of life in what might still be called schools.

To think through what this might mean for the many communities and the many individual of our nation should be the mission of teachers, poets, farmers, elected officials, scientists, and any others who would be involved in schools.

If we begin to think about institutional assessment in this new political language, then two questions become critical:

1. What kinds of honest, meaningful work should be offered to children and young people? Indeed, the question, "What is honest work in history? In literature? In social inquiry? becomes a vital concern.
2. What range of social milieux should be devise in order to allow for the diversity of human beings and the range of work opportunities that we should offer to our young? What are sensible work environments?

If these two general questions, focus our attention we will begin to consider critical problems of evaluation that our culture faces today.*

*The book Social Study: Inquiry Strategies in Elementary Classrooms by H. Millard Clements, William R. Fielder and B. Robert Tabachnick explores many of these issues in some depth. The book was published by Bobbs-Merrill, New York, in 1966.

The Politics of Work

The challenge to teachers is to develop opportunities for students to become engaged in significant conversation and meaningful work. The concern with the politics of work calls attention to questions such as these:

What is honorable work?

What ideas should be dealt with in school?

How should young people spend their time in school?

These are vital questions. Those who evaluate schools with political sensitivity must deal with them explicitly.

The work of schooling involves or is based on some conception of knowledge. If we are interested in politically explicit evaluation of schooling we could ask such questions as these:

1. What is knowledge taken to be:

   In history?

   In social science?

   In literary criticism?

Is the approach to the discussion, evaluation, and creation of knowledge ethically satisfactory and politically acceptable?

2. How is knowledge assessed as:

   Description of events and happenings?

   Interpretations and explanations of the causes of events and the nature of relationships?

Is the approach to the discussion, evaluation and development of interpretation of social happenings, events, conflicts sensible in light of ethical and political concerns?

Not only should be seek to determine if the work schools call upon children to do is honorable, we should seek to determine if there is an appropriate variety. Another way to make explicit political evaluation of social study in school is to ask such questions as these:

Does school work call upon children to:

- Give speeches?
- Look for the political meaning and bias of news reports, political speechs, editorials, and political decisions?
- Write with felicity?
- Interview adults and children?
- Read anthropological, scoiological and other social scientific writings?
- Look for the social meaning of the opinions people hold?
- Look for the political meaning and bias of school textbook materials?
- Distinguish between matters of fact and matters of opinion?

If children and youth are to engage in a sensible study of social realities they must deal with people, and events, and engage in the struggle that leads to critical understanding. If schools are not trying to engage in these matters, they have some other political mission.

In addition to formal somewhat academic activities that are an important aspect of school based social study, there are many practical skills of citizenship that can make an important contribution to social studies. Students can:

Petition government officials.

Evaluate city services.

Organize meetings.

Lobby governments of private associations.

Identify and evaluate various government services such as the agencies that regulate the phone companies, the quality of foods and drugs, the air lines, and the quality of the environment.

If these or similar activities are to be found in schools then that fact has political meaning. If no such activities are to be found in schools, there is another political reality.

Not only are there traditional disciplines and the multitude of other important social activities that might engage students in honorable and politically important concerns, we live in a nation, in communities and on a planet that is confronted with absolute problems of survival. The exploration of life and death issues is another aspect of the misstion of social studies that has an acceptable ethical base. The following questions are another approach to evaluating social studies programs. Are children in the schools critically studying:

The world food problems?

The energy debate?

The rich nations and the poor?

The promise and threat of technology?

Pollution of air, land and sea?

Our endangered condition?

The constant obligation to understand and defend our political freedoms?

These are all concerns of those who would engage children in meaningful work, useful work, demanding work. The problem of scholarship, the problem of trying to think intelligently, politically, ethically about school activities is a deep and arduous activity. It will test the intellectual resources and challenge the courage of all who would take up its labors.

The Politics of School Milieux

We can begin to think about the politics of school milieux by explicitly recognizing that a shool is:

1. A physical place.
2. A collection of people.
3. A system of rules.

A school is a social arrangement that is man made; there is nothing in the human genetic structure nor in the physical order of the universe that compells human beings to construct schools in any particular fashion. What is the political meaning of our usual way of socially inventing schools?

The Place. The physical place of schooling is the rooms, desks, books, cafeterias familiar to us all. In more affluent school districts there are many books, fewer desks and modern architecture. In economically oppressed

districts there are old untidy buildings, many desks and limited materials. But the design of school facilities in rich districts and in poor districts is essentially the same. A school is composed of classrooms, desks, halls and often a playground.

We can begin to think about the politics of place by posing this question:

Where should schooling occur?

The usual answer to this question is a special building in reasonably good repair. There should be classrooms that are light and cheerful, moveable furniture, individualized work areas, facilities for large and small meetings. Furniture salesmen, teachers, architects, curriculum developers and community militants might all agree.

If we are to explore the political meaning of what we do in education, we have to learn how to question our usual customs and our common understanding. What is the political accomplishment of creating the large, expensive, specialized buildings that we now call schools?

A school usually:

1. Separates the conduct of schooling from the conduct of business, art, science, industry, social service and civic life.
2. Restricts the associations of youth to adults to be found in schools.
3. Houses young people in facilities that are usually unsuitable for engagement in honest or productive work in art, science, technology, history, or citizenship.

4. Requires the management of large numbers of young people by a small number of officials. In this, schools and prisons are much alike.

An evaluation of school activities that was concerned with the place of schooling would assess the social and political wisdom of this usual arrangement for schooling.

The Collection. We can think about the collection of people usually to be found in school by posing this question:

Who should be in a school?

Our usual answer to this question would be children and well qualified, fully certified and, if possible, experienced teachers. If we are to doubt the wisdom of this common sense we must make its reality explicit and then evaluate its social and political accomplishment.

The collection of people to be found in schools has this result:

1. Few adults and many young people will be found in school.
2. The young people will be age graded.
3. The adults will seldom be poets, writers, lawyers, pharmicists, carpenters or historians.
4. The adults will tend to be individuals who have been socialized to perform managerial roles in large buildings containing many children and few adults.

This arrangement has political meaning. If we are to evaluate school activities we will have to assess this political reality.

The System of Rules. What is the school milieu that regulates the life of students and teachers in school. The choices, role possibilitiies, obligations, privileges and status arrangements of students and teachers are to some extent revealed by observing what students and teachers usually do in school:

Students usually:

Address their teachers as Mr., Miss, Mrs., or perhaps Ms.

Read assigned materials

Follow directions

Engage in assigned tasks

Take tests

Receive grades

Are suppliants if tests are poor or papers are late

Listen to teachers a great deal

And Teachers usually:

Address students by their first name

Prescribe reading material

Assign grades

Give directiosn

Assign tasks

Make up and administer tests

Grant dispensations

Talk a great deal

There may be differences in some of these matters but even if many of them are discarded, teachers discard them. The milieu of schooling assigns teachers a measure of self direction, responsibility, decision and initiative.

School milieux assign to students the role of compliance, powerlessness, submission and face the risk of the possibility for unruly and disorderly behavior. The everyday operations of public schools sustains the creations of two orders of social reality: there is one political reality for the professional staff and an entirely different reality for students.

If we are to evaluate the social system, the politics of school life attention must be given to the social condition of being a student. Two questions can focus our interest:

1. Is the condition of being a student in a school likely to engage him or her in honest, productive, demanding work?
2. What social condition of being a student is likely to help students to become engaged in honest productive work?

Considerable evidence suggests that the answer to the first question is too often, no. There is, of course, no simple answer to the second question.

Conclusion

I have been sharing with you some perspectives on the troubles of our times, my effort to resist the behavioral imperative, and my proposal that we develop evaluation procedures that focus attention upon moral and political characteristics of school life. We may disagree in our politics but we at least will be thinking and debating critical educational issues if we talk explicitly about the quality of life in our institutions.

Education is a moral and political endeavor and the scholarship that is important to it is the effort to assess the moral and political value of the experiences that we impose on children. What we should know is if the life a child (every single child without exception) leads in school is worth living. The following questions suggest a focus for school evaluation:

1. Are the tasks each student is called upon to do honest?
2. Are the materials that a student is called upon to read and consider honorable in their treatment of ideas and issues?
3. Are the physical arrangements for school work conducive to serious engagement?
4. Are the interpersonal relationships among young people and adults without violation of praxis?
5. Is the range of activities sensible?
6. Is the variety of adults to be found in school sufficient?
7. Is the involvement of teaching staff with children sensible?
8. Is there an effort to involve every child in some kind of meaningful work?

I think that if we can begin to ask these political questions we can begin to confront our problems of schooling today.

The evaluation of education should be concerned with the range and authenticity of the encounters with work and ideas rather than behavior manufacture. It should be concerned with the quality of interpersonal relationships rather than the establishment of a management caste system. This kind of evaluation would not only be an honest intellectual adventure, it would contribute to the possible survival of our species on our planet.

If knowledge is struggle and awareness rather than information about tactics for management, if teaching is conversation and community rather than behavior modification, if people are to be thought of as moral actors rather than things to be regulated in experimental studies, then we will have to re-think and reconstruct the details of arranging the work opportunities for children and the procedures for seeking awareness of ourselves and of each other. That reconsideration is the fundamental challenge of professional education.